4. 'Equal Opportunity Offices' to be created in all universities for effective implementation of schemes for disadvantaged sections of the society;

5. A new policy on Distance Learning would be formulated;

6. Regional Centre/Campus of Indira Gandhi National Tribal University, Amarkantak to be started in the state of Manipur;

7. Model degree colleges would be established in 100 districts with significant population of weaker sections and the minorities;

8. 100 women's hostels would be sanctioned in higher educational institutions located in districts with significant population of weaker sections and the minorities;

C. **Administrative and Other Initiatives**

1. Review of the functioning of the existing Deemed Universities;

2. Operationalizing newly established 12 Central Universities and 2 new IITs;

3. Academic reforms (semester system, choice-based credit system, regular revision of syllabi, impetus to research, etc. which are already mandated under the Central Universities Act, 2009) to be introduced in other Central Educational Institutions;

4. Modernization of Copyright Offices;

5. 5000 colleges/university departments to be provided with broadband internet connectivity under the National Mission on Education through ICT;

6. Assistance would be provided to States to establish at least 100 new polytechnics (over and above assistance already provided for 50 polytechnics in the last financial year) in districts without any polytechnic at present. States would also be assisted for the construction of 100 women's hostels in the existing polytechnics and for upgrading 50 existing polytechnics;

7. Approvals would be obtained for establishing 10 new NITs in the un-served States so that every State has one earmarked NIT;

8. Operationalising 700 revamped Community Polytechnics for skill development of rural youth;

9. Direct credit of scholarship into the bank accounts of 41,000 boys and 41,000 girls every year, under the new Merit Scholarship Scheme for students in the universities and colleges.

Central University in Gujarat

1920. SHRI NATUJI HALAJI THAKOR:
SHRI PARSHOTTAM KHODABHAI RUPALA:

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government has taken a decision to establish a Central University in Gujarat;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the State Government of Gujarat has already submitted details of suitable land and all other information required by Government; and

(c) if so, the time by which the University will be set up in Gujarat?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) to (c) The Central University of Gujarat has already been established by the Central Universities Act, 2009. The Government of Gujarat is to provide, free of cost, about 500 acres of land for this University. The location of the University will, therefore, depend on the various sites as may be offered by the State Government, and would be notified by the Central Government in the Official Gazette. The State Government has offered a few sites in Sabarkantha district. This Site Selection Committee constituted by the Central Government for finalization of the location of the university is expected to visit these shortly.

Participation of women members in Panchayat meeting

†1921. SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA:
SHRI BHAGWATI SINGH:

Will the Minister of PANCHAYATI RAJ be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that instead of elected women members, their husbands take part in the meeting of district Panchayats; and

(b) if so, the action being taken by Government to strengthen the Panchayati Raj system and empowerment of women?

THE MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI C.P. JOSHI): (a) and (b) 'Local Government' is a State subject and meetings under the Panchayati Raj System are convened and organized by all the three tiers of PRIs according to the respective State Panchayati Raj Act of each State/UT Government. No information relating to the participation by the husbands of elected women members in the meetings of district Panchayats is available at central level although anecdotal references have occasionally appeared in the print media in this regard. Ministry of Panchayati Raj has requested the State/UTs to ensure that such instances do not take place and some states have issued administrative instructions to curb such practices.

In order to supplement the efforts of State Governments for empowerment and capacity building of elected women representatives (EWRs), the Ministry of Panchayati Raj is implementing the "Panchayat Mahila Evam Yuva Shakit Abhiyan (PMEYSA)" targeted at elected women and youth representatives, which provides financial support to State/UT Governments for supporting the formation of Associations of EWRs and organizing training/sensitization programmes for such EWRs and EYRs who have been elected more than once, so that they are able to provide enlightened leadership in their Panchayats.

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.